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Security Council

Fifty-ninth year

Provisional

4989th meeting

Friday, 11 June 2004, 12.50 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Baja	(Philippines)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	France	Mrs. D'Achon
	Germany	Ms. Cadenbach
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2004/427)

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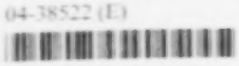

The meeting was called to order at 12.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Cyprus

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2004/427)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus, contained in document S/2004/427.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2004/484, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I should like to inform the Council that, in my capacity as President of the Council, I have met with the representatives of the parties, who have confirmed to me that they maintain their well-known positions vis-à-vis the item on the Council's agenda. On the basis of those meetings, as President, with the consent of the members of the Council, I have drawn the conclusion that the Council can proceed to take a decision on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1548 (2004).

I shall now give the floor to those members who wish to make statements following the voting.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the unanimous adoption of this resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). It is undeniable that the situation in Cyprus has evolved, not only since the referenda of 24 April but also over the 40 years that this operation has been on the island. We therefore support the Secretary-General's decision to conduct a comprehensive review of UNFICYP's role and to make recommendations in that regard. We look forward to early consideration of those recommendations by the Security Council with a view to tailoring UNFICYP to reflect current requirements.

The successful conclusion of the Council's deliberations on UNFICYP today will now allow the Council to turn its attention to consideration of the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2004/437), which the United Kingdom has welcomed.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): Recent significant developments in Cyprus, including the results of the referenda on the Secretary-General's peace plan and the entry of Cyprus into the European Union, have fundamentally changed the situation in Cyprus and necessitate a critical examination of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and of the need for the UNFICYP mission. We welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to provide recommendations on UNFICYP's mandate, size and concept of operations within three months. We also look forward to recommendations regarding future funding of UNFICYP.

The United States voted in favour of this resolution because it articulates a timeline by which the Council will act upon those recommendations. It should be clear that the appropriate action for the Council will be to adopt a new mandate for UNFICYP in the light of the Secretary-General's recommendations. Resources for peacekeeping operations are under strain, as the demand for United Nations peacekeeping has risen significantly in recent years. The Council must be willing to review ongoing peacekeeping operations to make changes as required by new circumstances in order to be a responsible steward of peacekeeping resources and to sustain support for new peacekeeping operations.

This resolution also addresses remaining restrictions on UNFICYP's operations by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot forces. We regret that, owing to the results of the referenda — specifically, the Greek Cypriot rejection of the United Nations plan — the territorial transfer envisioned to occur under the plan has not been realized. That would have resulted in the peaceful transfer of areas in which UNFICYP has dealt with, and must continue to deal with, violations of the military status quo, such as in Strovilia.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say a few words regarding the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices in Cyprus (S/2004/437). We regret the results of the 24 April referenda on the United Nations settlement plan, which represent a missed historic opportunity for peace. We deeply appreciate the even-handed work of the Secretary-General and of his Special Adviser, Alvaro de Soto, in the search for peace on Cyprus, and we welcome and support the Secretary-General's objective, balanced and accurate report.

We wholeheartedly support the conclusions and recommendations contained in that report. We agree with the report's conclusion that the rejection of the Secretary-General's settlement plan by the Greek Cypriot electorate raises fundamental questions regarding their commitment to a bizonal, bicommunal federal solution of the Cyprus problem. We support both the report's suggestion that Greek Cypriots may wish to reflect on that matter and the conclusion that, if they remain committed to such a solution, that needs to be demonstrated not just by words, but by action.

We agree with the report that the way ahead to a settlement is for the Greek Cypriots to articulate, with clarity and finality, concerns that they have indicated regarding implementation of the settlement plan and its security provisions. Only when they have been articulated can such concerns be addressed by the Secretary-General and by the Security Council, where we stand willing to play a constructive role.

We support the report's assessment that Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have done everything possible to reach a Cyprus settlement. We share the Secretary-General's appreciation for the efforts of Turkish Cypriot community leader Talat, both in the talks and in the run-up to the referenda. As the report says, the Turkish Government gave strong support to the Secretary-General's efforts to reach a solution. Prime Minister Erdoğan kept his commitment to be one step ahead in the efforts for a solution, and in fact it was the change of policy engineered by the Government of Turkey that made this year's peace effort possible.

With the Secretary-General, we appreciate Greece's support for his efforts, including specifically for his final settlement plan as well.

As the report states, Turkish Cypriots have, with their "yes" vote on 24 April, clearly and convincingly come out in favour of the reunification of Cyprus in a bicommunal, bizonal federation. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation in paragraph 93 of the report that members of the Security Council should encourage the Turkish Cypriots and Turkey to remain committed to the goal of reunification. We agree that, to that end — and not for the purpose of affording recognition or assisting secession — the Security Council should give a strong lead to all States to cooperate, both bilaterally and in international bodies, to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development. We concur with the Secretary-General's assessment that such a move is consistent with Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984).

We look forward to strong Security Council action in support of the Secretary-General and the recommendations contained in his report.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Following the Secretary-General's recommendation, we voted in favour of a six-month extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). We await with interest the results of the announced review of UNFICYP's mandate to be carried out by the Secretary-General.

Finally, we call upon the parties to maintain their commitment to the objective of reunification. We believe that any measure that facilitates reunification deserves our support. From that perspective, we consider it valid to adopt measures to narrow the development gap between the parties. Such measures must conform to the provisions of Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984), and, as the Secretary-General indicates in his report (S/2004/437), they must not have the objective of recognizing another State on Cyprus or of facilitating secession.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Pakistan voted in favour of resolution 1548 (2004), which authorizes an extension of the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) for six months. However, we supported the resolution with serious reservations.

This resolution was supposed to be a proposal for a technical extension of UNFICYP for a short period of time that would enable the Secretary-General and the Security Council to undertake a review of its mandate, force size and concept of operations in the light of the new circumstances. That is natural following the recent rejection of the Secretary-General's compromise plan for a comprehensive Cyprus settlement and bearing in mind the positions of the concerned parties. Thus, in our view, UNFICYP's mandate should have been extended for only three months to enable that review to take place, rather than for the six months endorsed in the resolution.

Moreover, the inclusion of operative paragraph 3 in the resolution changed it from a procedural to a substantive proposition. The reference in this paragraph could have been balanced by inclusion of language that was suggested by another delegation in our informal consultations. The resolution also should have incorporated a reference to the report of the Secretary-General on his good-offices mission, which was introduced by his Special Adviser, Mr. Alvaro de Soto, on 8 June.

In April this year, after decades of hostility on the island, the referendums on the Secretary-General's plan for the reunification of Cyprus offered the hope for a permanent settlement of the Cyprus problem. Unfortunately, the plan was rejected by the Greek Cypriot side, while it was accepted by the Turkish Cypriot side.

The Secretary-General considers it a historic opportunity that has been missed. That view is widely shared by the international community. The Secretary-General believes that the rejection of his plan is a major setback which will cast a dark shadow of uncertainty over the implementation of a number of issues so dear to the hearts of so many Cypriots, including the question of the reunification of the island.

In paragraph 83 of the report on his good-offices mission, the Secretary-General states:

> "Benefits for the Greek Cypriots, which have been sought for decades — including the reunification of Cyprus, the return of a large swathe of territory, the return of most displaced persons to their homes ... the withdrawal of all troops not permitted by international treaties ... have been forgone. The result is the maintenance of the status quo — a status quo deemed unacceptable by the Security Council."

In paragraph 93 of the report, the Secretary-General said:

> "I would hope they [the members of the Council] can give a strong lead to all States to cooperate both bilaterally and in international bodies to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development, deeming such a move as consistent with Security Council resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984)."

The Security Council will, we hope, soon endorse this recommendation of the Secretary-General and urge actions by the international community to take concrete steps to end the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community, which has been penalized for so many years and is now unable to enjoy the benefits of European Union membership accorded to their Greek Cypriot compatriots.

In the circumstances, and pending the Council's decision on the Secretary-General's good-offices report, the Security Council should have taken a position that was more even-handed in the resolution we adopted today. A provision to welcome the Secretary-General's good-offices report would have been one way to indicate such even-handedness. Unfortunately, even this suggestion was not accommodated in the text.

We can only hope that the resolution we have just adopted will not prove to be counterproductive and that it will not generate a further sense of injustice among the Turkish Cypriot community. The Security Council should act to strengthen the hand of the Secretary-General in any future move to implement his plan and help to bring us closer to the resolution of the Cyprus issue on the basis of a bicommunal, bizonal federation reflecting the wishes and interests of both the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot communities.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution on the question of Cyprus because it is a response to the request made by the Government of Cyprus that the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) be maintained on the island beyond 15 June 2004.

My delegation would have preferred that, as was agreed beforehand, the draft resolution be a purely technical text. Clearly, that is not quite the case, as has just been noted by my colleague from Pakistan.

My delegation hopes that the Security Council will consider the report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices, including the recommendations contained therein.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): My delegation voted in favour of the resolution, since, as recommended by the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), after consultations with both sides and the guarantor powers, and in the absence of a comprehensive settlement, the presence of UNFICYP on the island continues to be necessary.

We welcome the intention of the Secretary-General to conduct a review of UNFICYP's mandate, force levels and concept of operations. We believe that, in the current conditions, a comprehensive review of the scope of the United Nations Mission in Cyprus is required.

UNFICYP's review is an inextricable part of the way forward for Cyprus, as also noted in the Secretary-General's report on his mission of good offices. As a country of the region, Romania considers that efforts aimed at the reunification of Cyprus should continue. During the past month, there have been considerable advances towards a much better perspective for a solution to this longstanding problem. As stated in paragraph 81 of the report, "A new fluidity has developed in the interaction of the players." There have also been encouraging positive developments between Greece and Turkey; and probably the most important is the message sent by the Turkish Cypriots in favour of reunification.

All these elements can gradually improve the situation on the ground and create conditions conducive to renewed efforts. The responsibility for the continuation of efforts lies primarily with the leadership of the two communities. We need strong leadership and goodwill from all parties, as well as a sustained focus on the part of the international community, in order to reach a feasible solution to this longstanding issue.

The European Union played a major role in the recent attempt to end the division in the island. We hope that the European Union will continue to be the same driving force in the pursuit of the goal of the reunification of Cyprus.

Regarding the recommendations included in the good-offices report, we will support further action by the Council to encourage positive steps forward for Cyprus as well as any measure by the European Union or other international players aimed at promoting reunification and goodwill on the island. An incentive in that respect could be the removal of unnecessary restrictions and barriers for the Turkish Cypriot community, with due regard for resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984).

We would nonetheless like to caution against any rash steps that could upset the delicate balance in Cyprus.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.